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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000630

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SUBJECT: BORDER SECURITY OFFICERS PRAISE U.S. VISIT

Classified By: Rule of Law Coordinator James Yellin for reason 1.4 (d).

[¶1.](#) (SBU) SUMMARY: At a recent gathering at the Embassy, eight Iraqis who visited the U.S. under the International Visitors Program from November 7 to 26, 2005, had overwhelmingly positive comments about their trip. END SUMMARY.

ITINERARY

[¶2.](#) (SBU) The itinerary for the Iraqis included visits to the U.S. Departments of State, Homeland Security, Defense, and Justice, as well as to law enforcement training facilities in Texas and New Mexico. They celebrated Thanksgiving with host families in Connecticut.

RECEPTION AT EMBASSY BAGHDAD

[¶3.](#) (C) On January 28, the following eight Iraqis who visited the U.S. under the International Visitors Program attended a reception at Embassy Baghdad:

-- Major General Adnan Abdul-Hassan Manhal (Shia), Deputy Assistant Minister of Interior for Support Forces (duties include command of the Border Police);

-- CQain Ahmed Kareem (Sunni), deputy of Major General Manhal;

-- Lieutenant Colonel Abbas Al-Gebory (Sunni), Deputy Chief Police of Babil Province;

-- Colonel Saad Alwan (Sunni), Border Police officer;

-- Major General Hadi Taha Hassoon (Sunni), Border Police officer;

-- Major Ratha Ainad (Shia), Border Police officer;

-- Captain Amjad Saker Taeiah (Shia), Border Police officer;

-- Lieutenant Colonel Hassan Hushia Adnan (Shia), Border Police officer.

[¶4.](#) (C) At the reception, MG Manhal remarked, "The trip helped us understand the United States and the American people; it touched us deeply. We feel terrible when we hear about U.S. soldiers dying in Iraq. We owe the Coalition forces a great debt for liberating us." He also said that Americans often honor the values espoused by Islam more than do Iraqis.

[¶5.](#) (C) Manhal added that the biggest problem that Iraqis face is corruption. COL Alwan said that human rights training is necessary for security officials in Iraq. Alwan also praised

the practice in the United States of "putting qualified people in power, rather than one's relatives."

¶6. (C) With regard to media coverage of Iraq, CPT Kareen remarked, "Al-Jazeera has such a large negative effect on the region; can't the U.S. just tell them to shut up?" The Americans at the reception explained that although we sometimes disagree with Al-Jazeera, we believe in freedom of speech and do not believe censorship is appropriate.

COMMENT

¶7. (SBU) COMMENT: We should continue recruiting members of the Iraqi Security Forces for the International Visitors Program. We recommend that members of the Iraqi Police Service (the regular police) be among the next group of visitors and that Shia and Sunni, and at least two women, be included. END COMMENT.
KHALILZAD